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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

No. 2:17-CR-00420-SJO

Plaintiff,

GOVERNMENT'S OMNIBUS MOTION IN  
LIMINE REGARDING CERTAIN EVIDENCE  
AT TRIAL; MEMORANDUM OF POINTS  
AND AUTHORITIES

v.

ALEKSANDR SURIS and  
MAXIM SVERDLOV

DATE: August 6, 2019  
TIME: 9:00 a.m.  
COURTROOM: 10C

## Defendants

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Plaintiff United States of America, by and through its counsel of record, the Fraud Section of the Department of Justice, hereby submits the following motions in this Omnibus Motion in Limine:

1. Government's Motion in Limine to Exclude Evidence of Legitimate Services Provided by Defendant;
2. Government's Motion in Limine to Preclude Improper Use of Law Enforcement Interview Reports at Trial;
3. Government's Motion in Limine to Exclude Self-Serving Hearsay Statements Offered by Defendants;
4. Government's Motion in Limine to Exclude Argument Nullifying Jury;
5. Government's Motion in Limine to Exclude Evidence Related to Criminal Referral; and
6. Motion in Limine to Exclude Argument and Evidence that Medicare was Negligent.

This Motion is based on the attached Memorandum of Points and Authorities, the files and records of this case, and such further evidence and argument as may be presented at any hearing on the motion.

Dated: July 16, 2019

Respectfully submitted,

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## **MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The government submits this Omnibus Motion in Limine ("Omnibus Motion") on the following matters: (1) Motion in Limine to Exclude Evidence of Legitimate Services Provided by Defendants; (2) Motion in Limine to Preclude Improper Use of Law Enforcement Interview Reports; (3) Motion in Limine to Exclude Self-Serving Hearsay Statements Offered by Defendants; (4) Motion in Limine to Preclude Defendants from Arguing for Jury Nullification; (5) Motion in Limine to Exclude Evidence Related to Criminal Referral; and (6) Motion in Limine to Exclude Argument and Evidence that Medicare was Negligent.

12 The government submits the first motion in limine to exclude  
13 evidence that defendants provided legitimate services outside of the  
14 conduct charged in the First Superseding Indictment ("FSI"). Such  
15 evidence is irrelevant to disprove defendants' conduct as to the  
16 counts charged, and any hypothetical probative value is  
17 substantially outweighed by the danger of unfair prejudice,  
18 confusing the issues, misleading the jury, and wasting time.

19 The government submits the second motion in limine to preclude  
20 defendants from improperly using law enforcement interview reports  
21 as prior inconsistent statements against witnesses who did not  
22 write, review, or adopt the interview summaries. Agents from the  
23 Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") and Health and Human  
24 Services Office of the Inspector General ("HHS-OIG"), and Medicare  
25 contractors who wrote reports summarizing interviews of individuals  
26 ("interview summaries"), some of whom will be witnesses at trial.  
27 Because the subjects (as opposed to the authors) of the interview  
28 summaries have not read, reviewed, or adopted the summaries, the

1 government asks that the defendants be precluded from introducing  
2 the content of the interview summaries to impeach subjects of the  
3 reports during cross-examination or publishing the contents of the  
4 interview summaries to the jury.

5 The government submits the third motion to exclude self-serving  
6 hearsay statements offered by defendants. The government intends to  
7 present testimony from an HHS-OIG agent about statements made by the  
8 defendant Sverdlov. Such evidence is admissible under Federal Rule  
9 of Evidence 801(d)(2)(A) as statements of an opposing party.  
10 However, defendants may not themselves introduce their own out-of-  
11 court statements into evidence because that is hearsay within the  
12 scope of Rule 801(c).

13 The government submits the fourth motion to exclude argument  
14 for jury nullification. The defendants may not argue that the jury  
15 can find a defendant "not guilty," even if the law and facts would  
16 dictate a "guilty" verdict.

17 The government submits the fifth motion to exclude evidence  
18 related to a pending criminal referral pertaining to a government  
19 witness. Evidence of such a criminal referral constitutes improper  
20 extrinsic impeachment and character evidence and, as such, is  
21 inadmissible under Rules 608 and 609. Further, under Rule 403, any  
22 theoretical probative value of any such impeachment is substantially  
23 outweighed by danger of misleading the jury.

24 The government submits the sixth motion to exclude the  
25 admission of any evidence (including through defense cross-  
26 examination of government witnesses) or argument that Medicare's  
27 negligence contributed to or caused defendants' fraud. Medicare's  
28 purported negligence is irrelevant and inadmissible as a matter of

1 law, and any hypothetical probative value of such evidence is  
2 substantially outweighed by the danger of misleading the jury,  
3 confusing the issues before the Court, wasting time, and unfair  
4 prejudice to the government under Rule 403.

5 **II. BACKGROUND**

6 Defendants Aleksandr Suris ("defendant Suris") and Maxim  
7 Sverdlov ("defendant Sverdlov") are charged in the FSI filed on June  
8 5, 2018, with one count of conspiracy to commit health care fraud in  
9 violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1349 (Count 1) against both defendants;  
10 four counts of health care fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1347  
11 against both defendants (Counts 2-5); one count of conspiracy to  
12 commit health care fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1349 against  
13 defendant Suris (Count 6); six counts of health care fraud in  
14 violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1347 against defendant Suris (Counts 7-12);  
15 and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering in violation  
16 of 18 U.S.C. § 1956(h) against both defendants (Count 13). Dkt. 52.

17 The FSI alleges that the defendants variously defrauded  
18 Medicare (Suris and Sverdlov) and CIGNA (Suris only) by submitting  
19 false and fraudulent claims to these health care benefit programs on  
20 behalf of Royal Care Pharmacy ("Royal Care") which purported that  
21 certain patient prescriptions had been filled, and that the  
22 prescribed medications were medically necessary and provided to the  
23 patients. However, in truth and fact, Suris and Sverdlov were aware  
24 that these prescriptions were never filled or provided to Medicare  
25 and CIGNA patients, and that on certain occasions the prescribed  
26 medications were not medically necessary. The FSI further alleges  
27 that in order to facilitate this fraudulent scheme to bill Medicare  
28 and CIGNA for medications that were billed by Royal Care Pharmacy

1 but never filled or provided to patients, as well as to derive cash  
2 from this fraud, defendants purchased fictitious invoices from a  
3 drug wholesale company, TriMed Medical Wholesalers, Inc. ("TriMed").  
4 TriMed's fictitious invoices to Royal Care Pharmacy indicated that  
5 Royal Care Pharmacy had purchased certain amounts of prescription  
6 drugs from TriMed. However, this never actually occurred, and  
7 TriMed never actually provided any of the drugs listed on the  
8 fictitious invoices that Suris and Sverdlov paid for on behalf of  
9 Royal Care Pharmacy.

10 **III. MEET AND CONFER**

11 The government conferred with counsel for both defendants  
12 regarding this Motion.

13 **IV. ARGUMENT**

14 **A. GOVERNMENT'S MOTION IN LIMINE TO EXCLUDE EVIDENCE OF  
15 LEGITIMATE SERVICES PROVIDED BY DEFENDANTS OUTSIDE OF THE  
COUNTS IN THE INDICTMENT<sup>1</sup>**

16 The conspiracy to commit health care fraud and health care  
17 fraud counts in the FSI (Counts 1 through 12) focus on certain  
18 fraudulent submissions to Medicare and CIGNA for services that were  
19 not needed or were not provided. With this motion, the government  
20 seeks to exclude evidence that defendants may have provided  
21 legitimate services outside of the charged conduct. Such evidence  
22 is irrelevant, and any hypothetical probative value is substantially  
23 outweighed by the danger of unfair prejudice, confusing the issues,  
24 misleading the jury, and wasting time.

25 Evidence regarding legitimate conduct outside of the charged  
26 conduct is not relevant or admissible under Federal Rules of  
27

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28 <sup>1</sup> Suris objects to this motion. Sverdlov does not oppose the motion.

1 Evidence 401 and 402. "Evidence is relevant if: (a) it has any  
2 tendency to make a fact more or less probable than it would be  
3 without the evidence; and (b) the fact is of consequence in  
4 determining the action." Fed. R. Evid. 401; see also United States  
5 v. Dorsey, 677 F.3d 944, 951 (9th Cir. 2012) (citing Fed. R. Evid.  
6 402) (noting that "relevant evidence is generally admissible"). "A  
7 defendant cannot establish his innocence of crime by showing that he  
8 did not commit similar crimes on other occasions." Herzog v. United  
9 States, 226 F.2d 561, 565 (9th Cir. 1955), adhered to on reh'g, 235  
10 F.2d 664 (9th Cir. 1956); see also United States v. Whitfield, 590  
11 F.3d 325, 361 (5th Cir. 2009) ("[E]vidence of noncriminal conduct to  
12 negate the inference of criminal conduct is generally irrelevant.")  
13 (internal quotation omitted)).

14 In this case, evidence that legitimate services may have been  
15 provided on other occasions than those charged would not tend to  
16 make the existence of any fact that is of consequence to the  
17 determination of the action "more or less probable than it would be  
18 without the evidence" and is therefore not relevant. Fed. R. Evid.  
19 401. First, this evidence would not relate in any way to any of the  
20 counts in the indictment. Second, this evidence would not tend to  
21 disprove the defendants' participation in the charged scheme to  
22 defraud Medicare and CIGNA. Indeed, defendants could have provided  
23 legitimate services on some occasions, while also defrauding  
24 Medicare and CIGNA on the occasions charged in the FSI. In effect,  
25 the defendants would be trying to prove their innocence of the  
26 charged crimes by claiming that they are innocent in matters of  
27 which they are not charged. This is an improper tactic which should  
28 not be permitted.

Even if purportedly legitimate services had some marginal relevance, they would still be inadmissible under Federal Rule of Evidence 403, as the danger of misleading the jury, confusing the issues, and wasting time substantially outweighs any theoretical probative value of this evidence. See United States v. Arambula Ruiz, 987 F.2d 599, 604 (9th Cir. 1993) ("The determination must be made whether the danger of undue prejudice outweighs the probative value of the evidence . . . under Rule 403.") (quoting Fed. R. Evid. 403 Advisory Committee's Note) (internal quotation marks omitted).

The factual issues before the Court should be limited to the charged conduct in the FSI. Any evidence that the defendants may have provided legitimate services at times other than those charged in the FSI is irrelevant, and any hypothetical probative value of such evidence is substantially outweighed by the considerations of Rule 403. Therefore, the defendants should be precluded from presenting evidence of purportedly legitimate services.

**B. GOVERNMENT'S MOTION IN LIMINE REGARDING THE PROPER USE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT INTERVIEW REPORTS<sup>2</sup>**

As produced in discovery, various federal and state law enforcement agents wrote reports summarizing their interviews of certain witnesses, which the witnesses did not read, review, or adopt. The government has provided these interview summaries to the defense, but these interview summaries are not statements of the person interviewed under the Jencks Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3500. Therefore, the government asks that the Court preclude defense counsel from introducing the content of the interview summaries to impeach the subject witnesses during cross-examination, publishing

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<sup>2</sup> Suris and Sverdlov do not oppose this motion.

1 the contents of the interview summaries to the jury, or otherwise  
2 suggesting to the jury that the interview summaries are statements  
3 of witnesses who did not write them or adopt them.

4 In order to provide for full and fair cross-examination, the  
5 Jencks Act requires that after a witness for the United States  
6 testifies on direct examination, the government must provide the  
7 defense with any statements made by the witness that relate to the  
8 subject of his or her testimony. 18 U.S.C. § 3500. A statement  
9 within the meaning of the Jencks Act is defined as "a written  
10 statement made by said witness and signed or otherwise adopted and  
11 approved by him;" a recording or transcription that "is a  
12 substantially verbatim recital of an oral statement made by said  
13 witness and recorded contemporaneously;" or a statement made by a  
14 witness to the grand jury. Id. § 3500(e).

15 In Palermo v. United States, the Supreme Court held that  
16 because the Jencks Act is meant to restrict the defendant's use of  
17 discoverable statements to impeachment, 360 U.S. 343, 349 (1959),  
18 "only those statements which could properly be called the witness'  
19 own words should be made available to the defense." Id. at 352.  
20 The Court went on to elaborate that "summaries of an oral statement  
21 which evidence substantial selection of material" or "statements  
22 which contain [an] agent's interpretations or impressions" are "not  
23 to be produced." Id. at 352-53.

24 Consistent with Palermo, interview summaries are not  
25 discoverable under the Jencks Act because they are not statements of  
26 the witness within the meaning of the statute. Unless a witness has  
27 reviewed and adopted an interview summary - which was not the  
28 practice in this case - the interview summary is not a statement of

1 the witness under subsection (e)(1) of the Jencks Act. Moreover,  
2 because the interview summaries were written after the interviews  
3 were completed and reflect the thought process and interpretations  
4 of the agent, they do not constitute a contemporaneous and  
5 substantially verbatim recital of the witness's statement under  
6 subsection (e)(2).

7 The Ninth Circuit has held that interview summaries written by  
8 an agent are not Jencks Act material as to the interviewed witness  
9 to the extent that the witness has not adopted or approved the  
10 summaries. See United States v. Claiborne, 765 F.2d 784, 801 (9th  
11 Cir. 1985) ("[B]ecause the summaries represent . . . the agents'  
12 selection of certain information . . . the district court properly  
13 characterized the summaries as non-Jencks Act material."), abrogated  
14 on other grounds by Ross v. Oklahoma, 487 U.S. 81 (1988); United  
15 States v. Reed, 575 F.3d 900, 921 (9th Cir. 2009) (finding no Jencks  
16 Act violation when a government agent "had taken handwritten notes  
17 of interviews, converted them into a typed report, and then  
18 destroyed the original notes" because there was no evidence that the  
19 notes were "adopted or approved by any of the witnesses").

20 Other circuits have decided the question similarly. See, e.g.,  
21 United States v. Price, 542 F.3d 617, 621 (8th Cir. 2008) (holding  
22 that absent evidence that the witnesses "approved or adopted" the  
23 interview summaries, "these documents are not discoverable under  
24 . . . the Jencks Act"); United States v. Jordan, 316 F.3d 1215, 1255  
25 (11th Cir. 2003) (holding that interview summaries "are not Jencks  
26 Act statements of the witness unless they are substantially verbatim  
27 and were contemporaneously recorded, or were signed or otherwise  
28 ratified by the witness"); United States v. Donato, 99 F.3d 426, 433

1 (D.C. Cir. 1996) ("[T]he agent's notes and 302 report . . . are not  
2 covered by the Jencks Act."); United States v. Roseboro, 87 F.3d  
3 642, 646 (4th Cir. 1996) ("[T]he district court's finding that the  
4 FBI 302 Report was not a Jencks Act statement is not clearly  
5 erroneous."); United States v. Farley, 2 F.3d 645, 654-55 (6th Cir.  
6 1993) (holding that because there was "no proof that the statement  
7 was adopted or approved . . . it was not clearly erroneous . . . to  
8 deny defendants access to the FBI 302"); United States v. Williams,  
9 998 F.2d 258, 269 (5th Cir. 1993) ("We hold that the FBI Forms 302  
10 were not discoverable statements under the Jencks Act."); United  
11 States v. Morris, 957 F.2d 1391, 1402 (7th Cir. 1992) ("[T]he  
12 documents are not statements producible under the Jencks Act because  
13 they were neither signed nor adopted . . . and further because they  
14 were not a verbatim recital . . . but rather only an agent's summary  
15 . . . ."); United States v. Foley, 871 F.2d 235, 239 (1st Cir. 1989)  
16 ("It is plain that the 302s are not substantially verbatim recitals  
17 . . . and recorded contemporaneously . . . .").

18 As the Supreme Court articulated in Palermo, "[i]t would "be  
19 grossly unfair to allow the defense to use statements to impeach a  
20 witness which could not fairly be said to be the witness' own rather  
21 than the product of the investigator's selections, interpretations,  
22 and interpolations." 360 U.S. at 350. Accordingly, the government  
23 requests that the Court preclude defendants from using the interview  
24 summaries inconsistently with the law and rules of evidence.  
25 Particularly, the contents of interview summaries should not be used  
26 to impeach witnesses on the basis of prior inconsistent statements,  
27 because the statements are not the statements of the witnesses  
28 themselves. Nor should the defense be allowed to publish or

1 introduce the contents of the summaries as a prior inconsistent  
2 statement. See United States v. Brika, 416 F.3d 514, 529 (6th Cir.  
3 2005) (holding that interview summaries "have been deemed  
4 inadmissible for impeaching witnesses on cross-examination"),  
5 abrogated on other grounds by United States v. Booker, 543 U.S. 222  
6 (2005); United States v. Leonardi, 623 F.2d 746, 757 (2d Cir.  
7 1980) (holding that because "the written statement of the FBI agent  
8 was not attributable to [the witness]" it was "properly rejected as  
9 a prior inconsistent statement"); United States v. Hill, 526 F.2d  
10 1019, 1026 (10th Cir. 1975) (upholding the trial court's decision to  
11 "not allow counsel to use the 302 statement to impeach a witness  
12 because the witness did not prepare or sign the document and  
13 probably never adopted it").

14 For the foregoing reasons, the government respectfully requests  
15 that the Court order the defendants cannot use the interview  
16 summaries to impeach witnesses on the basis of inconsistent  
17 statements, not to publish or introduce the contents of the  
18 summaries as prior inconsistent statements, or otherwise suggest to  
19 the jury that the interview summaries are statements of witnesses  
20 who did not write them or adopt them.

21       **C. GOVERNMENT'S MOTION IN LIMINE TO EXCLUDE HEARSAY  
22 STATEMENTS OFFERED BY DEFENDANTS<sup>3</sup>**

23       Under Federal Rule of Evidence 801(d)(2), the government may  
24 offer defendants' out-of-court statements as non-hearsay statements  
25 of an opposing party. However, the defendants cannot seek to  
26 introduce their own out-of-court statements for their truth as those

27 \_\_\_\_\_  
28 <sup>3</sup> Suris does not oppose this motion. The government was unable to  
reach Sverdlov for his position.

1 would be inadmissible hearsay.

2 A "statement offered against an opposing party," which "was  
 3 made by the party in an individual or representative capacity," is  
 4 not hearsay. Fed. R. Evid. 801(d)(2)(A). Defendants' false  
 5 exculpatory statements, when offered by the government, are also  
 6 admissible to prove consciousness of guilt rather than the truth of  
 7 the statement. See United States v. McCall, 592 F.2d 1066, 1068  
 8 (9th Cir. 1979) (per curiam) (in prosecution for possession of  
 9 counterfeit money with intent to defraud, defendant's inconsistent  
 10 exculpatory statements concerning source of counterfeit bills could  
 11 be regarded as evidence of consciousness of wrongdoing), cert.  
 12 denied, 441 U.S. 936 (1979); United States v. Pistante, 453 F.2d  
 13 412, 413 (9th Cir. 1971) ("False exculpatory statements by a party  
 14 may be used not only to impeach, but also to prove consciousness of  
 15 guilt and unlawful intent."); Fox v. United States, 381 F.2d 125,  
 16 129 (9th Cir. 1967) (defendant's lies regarding ownership of truck  
 17 provided significant additional evidence of his guilt).

18 On the other hand, the defendants' self-serving exculpatory  
 19 statements are not admissible when offered by defendants. See Fed.  
 20 R. Evid. 801(c), 802; United States v. Ortega, 203 F.3d 675, 682  
 21 (9th Cir. 2000) ("The self-inculpatory statements, when offered by  
 22 the government, are admissions by a party-opponent and are therefore  
 23 not hearsay, but the non-self-inculpatory statements are  
 24 inadmissible hearsay.") citing Williamson v. United States, 512 U.S.  
 25 594, 599 (1994). Allowing a defendant to elicit his or her own  
 26 exculpatory hearsay statements through witness testimony or cross-  
 27 examination would allow the defendant to "place his exculpatory  
 28 statements 'before the jury without subjecting [himself] to cross-

1 examination, precisely what the hearsay rule forbids.'" Ortega, 203  
2 F.3d at 682, quoting United States v. Fernandez, 839 F.2d 639, 640  
3 (9th Cir. 1988).

4 Defendants may not introduce their own exculpatory hearsay  
5 statements even when the defendant made the exculpatory statements  
6 alongside inculpatory ones. See Williamson, 512 U.S. at 599 ("We  
7 see no reason why collateral statements, even ones that are neutral  
8 as to interest, should be treated any differently from other hearsay  
9 statements that are generally excluded.") (citation omitted); United  
10 States v. Mitchell, 502 F.3d 931, 964 (9th Cir. 2007) (defendant's  
11 exculpatory statements not admissible at trial even though they were  
12 made in "a more broadly self-inculpatory confession").

13 For these reasons, the government respectfully requests that  
14 the Court exclude as hearsay the defendants' own statements when  
15 offered by the defendants.

16 D. GOVERNMENT'S MOTION IN LIMINE TO EXCLUDE ARGUMENT  
17 CONCERNING JURY NULLIFICATION<sup>4</sup>

18 Defendants should be barred from making any argument for, or  
19 otherwise attempting to seek, jury nullification. In United States  
20 v. Thomas, the Second Circuit held that a "jury has no more 'right'  
21 to find a 'guilty' defendant 'not guilty' than it has to find a 'not  
22 guilty' defendant 'guilty' . . . . Such verdicts are lawless, a  
23 denial of due process and constitute an exercise of erroneously  
24 seized power." 116 F.3d 606, 615 (2d Cir. 1997) (internal  
25 quotations and citations omitted). The Ninth Circuit has also  
26 confirmed that defendants are not entitled to jury instructions

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28 <sup>4</sup> Suris does not oppose this motion. The government was unable to  
reach Sverdlov for his position.

1 concerning jury nullification. See e.g., United States v. Powell,  
2 955 F.2d 1206, 1212-13 (9th Cir. 1991) (holding that the defendant  
3 has no right to instruct the jury to nullify itself); United States  
4 v. Simpson, 460 F.2d 515, 519 (9th Cir. 1972). Accordingly,  
5 defendant should be precluded from arguing for or otherwise seeking  
6 jury nullification.

7       **E. GOVERNMENT'S MOTION IN LIMINE EXCLUDING EVIDENCE OF**  
8       **CRIMINAL REFERRAL<sup>5</sup>**

9           Defendant Suris has informed the government that he may seek to  
10 introduce evidence related to a 2018 criminal referral from the  
11 United States Bankruptcy Trustee related to government witness  
12 Richard Kayseryan's bankruptcy proceedings. Because evidence of a  
13 criminal referral from the bankruptcy trustee constitutes improper  
14 extrinsic impeachment and character evidence, it should be excluded.

15           Federal Rule of Evidence 608 lays out the proper means by which  
16 a party may attack a witness's credibility. A witness's credibility  
17 may be attacked by reputation testimony about their character for  
18 untruthfulness. Fed. R. Evid. 608(a). However, except for a  
19 criminal conviction under Rule 609, extrinsic evidence is not  
20 admissible to prove specific instances of conduct in order to attack  
21 a witness' character for truthfulness. Fed. R. Evid. 608(b).

22           The criminal referral for Kayseryan is not reputation  
23 testimony, and so is inadmissible under Rule 608(a), and is not a  
24 criminal conviction, and so is not admissible under Rule 609.  
25 Accordingly, evidence of the criminal referral would constitute  
26 extrinsic evidence offered in order to attack the witness's

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<sup>5</sup> Suris reserved the right to oppose this motion. Sverdlov does not  
28 oppose the motion and asserted that such a criminal referral is not  
admissible.

1 character for truthfulness, and so would be inadmissible under Rule  
2 608(b).

3 Finally, under Fed. R. Evid. 403, any theoretical probative  
4 value of any such impeachment is substantially outweighed by danger  
5 of misleading the jury. The inferences created through the  
6 defendants' cross-examination regarding the criminal referral could  
7 only fairly be rebutted by allowing the government to introduce  
8 evidence of the pending nature or declination of that matter as  
9 substantive evidence. Such a circumstance would result in a "mini-  
10 trial" on a secondary, subordinate issue that is irrelevant to the  
11 conduct charged in the FSI and would unduly delay the trial and  
12 likely confuse the jury.

13 **F. GOVERNMENT'S MOTION IN LIMINE TO EXCLUDE ARGUMENT AND  
14 EVIDENCE THAT MEDICARE OR CIGNA WERE NEGLIGENT<sup>6</sup>**

15 The government seeks to preclude the admission of any evidence  
16 (including through defense cross-examination of government  
17 witnesses) or argument that Medicare's or CIGNA's negligence  
18 contributed to or caused defendants' fraud.

19 Because Medicare's or CIGNA's purported negligence is  
20 irrelevant to the criminal charges at issues in this case, any  
21 evidence or argument concerning purported negligence should be  
22 excluded. Such evidence should also be excluded because any  
23 hypothetical probative value is substantially outweighed by the  
24 danger of unfair prejudice, confusing the issues, misleading the  
25 jury, and wasting time.

26 In a federal criminal fraud case, negligence on the part of a  
27 victim, even if proven, constitutes no defense to the charges. The

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28 <sup>6</sup> Defendants do not oppose this motion.

1 instant motion in limine seeks to preclude defendants from "blaming"  
2 Medicare or CIGNA in the face of defendants' own deliberate  
3 misconduct. Defendants may seek to divert the jury's attention -  
4 and waste the Court's valuable time - by pointing their fingers at  
5 the victims, Medicare and CIGNA, which paid their fraudulent claims.  
6 However, whether Medicare or CIGNA should have taken additional  
7 steps or required more information in connection with these claims  
8 is entirely irrelevant to the criminal charges in this case. The  
9 focus of this criminal trial should be on defendants' misconduct,  
10 not on whether their victims should (or even could) have done more  
11 to avoid defendants' fraud.

12 The negligence of the victim in failing to discover a  
13 fraudulent scheme is not a defense to criminal conduct. United  
14 States v. Lindsey, 850 F.3d 1009, 1015 (9th Cir. 2017). In Lindsay,  
15 the Ninth Circuit joined its "sister circuits in holding that a  
16 victim's negligence is not a defense to wire fraud. Evidence of  
17 lender negligence is thus not admissible as a defense to mortgage  
18 fraud." Id. Lenders cannot "be victimized by intentional  
19 fraudulent conduct with impunity merely because the lenders were  
20 negligent . . ." Id. at 1014. The Ninth Circuit's decision  
21 followed similar holdings by several other courts of appeals. See,  
22 e.g., United States v. Coyle, 63 F.3d 1239, 1244 (3rd Cir. 1995) (in  
23 mail fraud case, rejecting relevance of defendant's allegations that  
24 victim was negligent, even if true); United States v. Davis, 226  
25 F.3d 346, 358-59 (5th Cir. 2000) (affirming jury instruction that  
26 "the naivety, carelessness, negligence, or stupidity of a victim  
27 does not excuse criminal conduct, if any, on the part of a defendant  
28 . . . . Even the monumental credulity of a victim does not excuse a

1 defendant's fraud, if any"); United States v. Thomas, 377 F.3d 232,  
2 243-44 (2nd Cir. 2004) (affirming restrictions on cross-examination  
3 of victim; rejecting defendant's argument that victim's foolishness  
4 vitiated defendant's fraudulent intent).

5 The Ninth Circuit's decision in Lindsay also comports with  
6 precedent that the government need not prove that the scheme was  
7 calculated to deceive persons of ordinary prudence and  
8 comprehension. United States v. Ciccone, 219 F.3d 1078, 1083 (9th  
9 Cir. 2000) ("[T]he wire-fraud statute protects the naive as well as  
10 the worldly-wise. . . . [T]he lack of guile on the part of those  
11 solicited may itself point with persuasion to the fraudulent  
12 character of the artifice.") (quotations omitted).

13 Here, the evidence will not support any claim of victim  
14 negligence made by defendants, and any such evidence is irrelevant  
15 to the charges at issue. But given that such negligence, even if  
16 proven, is no defense as a matter of law, defendants should not be  
17 permitted present argument or evidence of possible negligence,  
18 including through cross-examination of government witnesses.  
19 Moreover, any hypothetical probative value of such evidence would be  
20 substantially outweighed by the danger of unfair prejudice to the  
21 government, misleading the jury, confusing the issues before the  
22 jury, and wasting time and should be excluded under Rule 403.

23 **V. CONCLUSION**

24 For the foregoing reasons, the government respectfully requests  
25 that the Court grant the relief sought in the government's Omnibus  
26 Motion in Limine, and order the following: (1) that evidence of  
27 legitimate services provided by defendants be excluded; (2) that  
28 defendants are precluded from using interview summaries improperly

1 at trial; (3) that defendants may not offer defendants' own self-  
2 serving hearsay statements at trial; (4) that defendants are  
3 precluded from arguing for jury nullification; (5) that defendants  
4 are precluded from introducing evidence related to the criminal  
5 referral; and (6) that defendants may not offer evidence or argument  
6 that Medicare's or CIGNA's purported negligence contributed to or  
7 caused defendants' fraud.

8  
9 Respectfully submitted,

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15  
16 DATED: July 16, 2019

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